

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

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FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1153

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

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AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, QA

SUBJ: BROADENING COUNTRY-FINANCED TECHNICAL COOPERATION

REF: 75 ABU DHABI 2568, 75 DOHA 1233, 75 ABU DHABI 2444

1. WE SUPPORT FULLY ABU DHABI'S RENEWED REQUEST FOR VISIT OF SENIOR USG OFFICIAL TO GULF STATES FOR TOP LEVEL DISCUSSION OF REIMBURSABLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (REF A). AS WE HAVE REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, GOQ COULD BENEFIT FROM RTA IN NUMBER OF FIELDS, BUT IN VIEW OF PROVEN ABILITY OF LOCAL BUREAUCRACY TO BURY PROPOSALS RECEIVED FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTS AND PRIVATE SECTOR, EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON RTA WITH AMIR HIMSELF IS ESSENTIAL PRELUDE TO TEAM VISIT.

2. ON RELATED SUBJECT, WE BELIEVE TIME IS RIGHT FOR DIALOG WITH GOQ ON US PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SIMILAR TO PARSKY/OTAIBA MEETINGS DESCRIBED REF C. GOQ IS PLANNING MAJOR PROJECTS WITH TOTAL WORTH OF ABOUT \$3 BILLION, AND NUMBER OF THESE SHOULD PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR US FIRMS. HOWEVER, BASED ON PAST EXPERIENCE, GENERAL APPROACH ON GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT LEVEL MAY BE NECESSARY TO INSURE THAT WE GET A SIGNIFICANT SLICE OF THE PIE. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IN LIGHT OF RECENT HIGH LEVEL CONTACTS BETWEEN GOQ AND

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COUNTRIES SUCH AS FRANCE AND UK THAT HAVE RESULTED IN AGREEMENTS

FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION.

3. PROJECTS PRESENTLY IN FEASIBILITY STUDY OR DESIGN STAGE
INCLUDE REFINERY, NGL PLANT AND LNG FACILITY. GIVEN LEADING US
POSITION IN GAS AND OIL TECHNOLOGY, WE SHOULD BE IN PARTICULARLY
GOOD POSITION IN COMPETITION FOR THESE CONTRACTS. HOWEVER,
NUMBER OF IMPORTANT CONTRACTS HERE HAVE BEEN AWARDED BY
DIRECT NEGOTIATION RATHER THAN THROUGH TENDER PROCESS. THESE
INCLUDE PETROCHEMICAL COMPLEX (FRENCH), STEEL MILL (JAPANESE)
AND FERTILIZER PLANT (NORWEGIAN). WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOQ MAY BE
CONSIDERING SAME APPROACH ON PROPOSED EXPORT REFINERY AND HAVE
REPORTED THIS TO DEPT AS POSSIBLE JOINT VENTURE OPPORTUNITY FOR
US OIL COMPANIES. TIMELY VISIT BY USG OFFICIAL PREPARED TO DISCUSS
THIS AND OTHER PROJECTS COULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARD PUTTING US
ON COMMERCIAL MAP HERE. WHILE WE UNABLE TO GUARANTEE RESULTS
OF SUCH AN APPROACH, IT SHOULD SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVE OUR PROSPECTS
GIVEN GOQ'S PROPENSITY FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. SIMPLE FACT
OF VISIT BY UNDERSECRETARY ROBINSON OR OFFICIAL OF SIMILAR
CALIBER WOULD BE MAJOR PLUS IN VIEW OF PIQUE REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED
BY GOQ OFFICIALS OVER WHAT THEY SEE AS INATTENTION BY HIGHER
ECHELONS OF USG.
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